

in answer to the First Admonition, that the Bible, though the absolute authority in doctrine, did not set up a hard-and-fast standard of discipline and Church government. Discipline and government were adaptable to circumstances. "The apostolical government was adapted to the Church in its infancy and under persecution, but was to be enlarged and altered as the Church grew to maturity, and had the civil magistrate on its side." The Bible, in other words, should be interpreted in the light of the first four centuries of the Church's history. Cartwright, who had been expelled from his chair and from the university, and driven into exile at Antwerp at Whitgift's instigation, inflexibly maintained, on the other hand, the sole authority of Scripture. "The holy Scripture," he insisted in "The Second Admonition to Parliament," "is not only a standard of doctrine, but of discipline and government, and the Church of Christ in all ages is to be regulated by them/" It was in vain that Whitgift urged, in a second onslaught, considerations of reason and policy. "The question is not whether many things mentioned in your platform of discipline were fitly used in the apostles' time, or may now be well used in sundry reformed Churches ; this is not denied ; but whether, when there is a settled order in doctrine and government established by law, it may stand with godly and Christian wisdom to attempt so great alterations as this platform must needs bring in, with disobedience to the prince and laws, and unquietness of the Church and offence of many consciences." The Bible, not expediency, again retorted Cartwright in a second philippic, is the supreme arbiter in such matters, for have not the Fathers erred and corruption crept into the Church? "Therefore, they ought to have no further credit than their authority is warranted by the word of God and good reason; to prove their authority, without relation to this, is to bring an intolerable tyranny into the Church of God."

A far more powerful answer to Cartwright appeared twenty years later in Hooker's "Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity," written with an amplification of argument and a grandeur of diction to which no English controversialist had hitherto been equal, and which invests his book with a high literary and philosophical excellence. Hooker laboured to confute